



The Redstart

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OBSERVATIONS AT STONY RIVER DAM

by

Maurice Brooks

In 1911, the West Virginia Pulp and Paper Company built a dam which impounds the water of Stony River and forms a lake atop the Allegheny Plateau in Grant County, West Virginia. This lake, measuring about three miles in length and nearly a half-mile in breadth, has an elevation above sea-level of 3,400 feet, nearly a thousand feet higher than any other considerable body of water in the state.

During the 1937 mountain camp of the Oglebay Park Nature Training School, a group of the students, Mr. M. Graham Netting, of the Carnegie Museum, Pittsburgh, and the writer secured permission to go through the padlocked gates onto the company's property and a visit was made to the dam on July 7. Since we could spend only a few hours there, our impressions are hurried and superficial, but we did find enough to convince us that biological work in the neighborhood will be well worth while.

The area immediately surrounding the lake was lumbered by the Babcock Lumber Company, whose methods represent the acme in destructive timber removal. The second growth here is comparable to that between Davis and Thomas, Tucker County, a region lumbered by the same company. Fire Cherry, Bracken and Scrub Aspens form most of the ground cover with enough Service and Elder to furnish some summer bird food. On the low ridges that rise above the lake, however, the reforestation is a little more hopeful, with some Red Spruce, Pitch Pine and mixed hardwoods appearing.

Along the road leading to the dam, after the top of the mountain has been reached, are two areas of unusual interest. There is an extensive second-growth of dense Spruce and Pitch Pine, the trees now of a size to be attractive to birds. There is also a large Cranberry bog, quite the wettest one I have seen in the state, and which has a rich flora.

Between these two areas and the dam there is a good deciduous growth with a fine ground cover.

Around the lake itself we found many Juncos, some Savannah Sparrows, Olive-backed Thrushes in song and Henslow's Sparrows, which were apparently breeding. A young bird of the latter species was seen and Leonard Llewellyn found an adult calling. An attempt was made to collect both birds, without success, since they dived into deep grass as is their custom. The common Warblers of northern association were found in the Spruce-Pine areas and near the border of the Cranberry bog we noted Purple Finches. A single, unidentified duck was seen on the lake, but Mr. Becker, the permanent caretaker, told us that ducks do not nest locally, so far as he knows. He reports that "white herons" (sp?) are found in numbers at the lake in mid and late summer, and that many waterfowl light here during migration.

Flying over the bog were Nighthawks, here probably nesting on the exposed rock ledges that top the ridges. Nighthawks are seldom seen in summer in West Virginia, so far as my experience goes, and those noted are most frequently about towns where they nest on gravel roofs. Chimney Swifts noted here also probably follow their primitive habits of nesting in hollow trees. Ravens are reported as common locally, but we saw none on our brief visit. There are abundant nesting places for them on the mountain cliffs.

The general territory around the dam should be extremely attractive to fall migrants. Berry fruits are present in greatest profusion; Service of several species, Common and Red-berried Elder, Mountain Ash, Fire and Black Cherry, and literally thousands of acres of Blueberries (Vaccinium). Late August visits to this region should yield extensive bird lists.

West Virginia University
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A COMPARISON OF MIGRATION DATES, 1937.

by
P. P. Malley and C. B. Shoemaker

Editor's Note: - The following data were assembled by the authors and placed in comparison with similar data for migrants as recorded in The REDSTART for the West Virginia Panhandle region. Most of the Pittsburgh data was secured from field notes made at Frick Park, unless otherwise noted.

The material is submitted in three general divisions, comparisons of different dates, notation of similar dates and dates for species not included in the Brooks Bird Club migration record for 1937. Pittsburgh dates for 1936 are included, also, in the first two tables.

Comparison of Pittsburgh and W. Va. Migration Dates, 1937.

<u>Species</u>	<u>Arr. at Pgh.</u>	<u>Arriv. in W. Va.</u>	<u>1936 Arr. Pgh.</u>
Black Duck (a)	3-7	4-4	
Mourning Dove	3-19	3-27	3-15
Blk-b. Cuckoo	5-14	5-16	5-13
Nighthawk (b)	5-17	5-22	5-9
R-t. Hummer	5-15	5-16	5-22
Phoebe	3-20	3-30	3-20
Brown Thrasher	4-16	4-17	4-12
R-c. Kinglet	4-6	4-11	4-15
Blue-h. Vireo	4-21	4-25	4-27
Warb. Vireo	4-21	4-24	5-13
Gold. w. Warbler	5-10	5-15	5-5
Magnolia Warbler	5-1	5-8	5-7
Ovenbird	5-1	5-2	4-29
Wilson Warbler	5-12	5-16	5-8
Canada Warbler	5-14	5-16	5-10
Cowbird	3-23	3-28	4-1
Vesper Sparrow	4-2	4-4	4-7
Fox Sparrow (#)	3-17	4-4	2-29

(a) Seen on Beaver River, may have wintered there.

(b) East Liberty

(#) Editor's Note: Winters here, as indicated Pittsburgh 1936 date.

Simultaneous Arrival Dates Listed Pittsburgh and W.Va.

<u>Pittsburgh and W. Va.</u>	<u>Pgh. Arr. 1936</u>
Sharp-shinned Hawk (##) 4-18	3-20
Least Flycatcher 5-2	5-11
Wood Thrush 4-24	4-28
Hermit Thrush 4-4	3-30
B. & W. Warbler 4-24	4-29
Field Sparrow 3-27	3-29

(##) Editor's Note: Common enough in Winter so that it's difficult to pick out migrants in W. Va. Panhandle.

Species Not Represented on W. Va. List

Red-breasted Merganser (c) 3-7; Scaup (d), 3-7; Olive-sided Flycatcher, 5-23; Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, 5-24; Migrant Shrike, 4-17; Mourning Warbler, 5-23; Rusty Blackbird, 4-17; Swamp Sparrow, (e) 4-7.

(c) Beaver River.

(d) Beaver River, probably Lesser Scaup.

(e) Seen several times. On one day, ten were seen.

Munhall, Pennsylvania.

FIELD NOTES

Least Bittern in Harrison County, Ohio: The writer wishes to report a sight record of the Eastern Least Bittern, Ixobrychus exilis exilis, for Harrison County, Ohio. One individual was seen by Violet Weir (Shields) and the writer about three miles beyond Cadiz, Ohio, on Route 250, on July 5, 1937. The bird was flying low over the marshy lowlands and was quite near us.

So far as records of the Brooks Bird Club are concerned, to my knowledge, this is the first record for the species for Harrison County.

-- Tom E. Shields,
Wheeling, W. Va.

Editor's Note: Lawrence Hicks summary of "Breeding Birds of Unglaci-ated Ohio," (The Cardinal, Vol. IV, No. 6, July, 1937.) does not list the species for Harrison county.

Sudden Increase in Bird Population in an Ohio City: In the suburban parts of a city, it is quite possible to compile a fair-sized list of birds; but when one becomes very well acquainted with the bird life of a certain part of town, and notices a sudden increase in it, there is reason to ponder the matter.

Such an increase occurred on Whitely Street, in Kirkwood, a suburb of Bridgeport, Ohio, Belmont County, on July 3 and 4, 1937. A large number of birds gathered there in the tops of several tall Silver Maple trees. The birds noted were:

Chimney Swift, Flicker, Downy Woodpecker, Catbird, Robin, Starling, English Sparrow, Bronzed Grackle, Cowbird, Cardinal and Goldfinch.

Many individuals were present. Of the species represented, Downy Woodpeckers, Cowbirds and Goldfinches are usually not found there at this season of the year. The other species were present in greater numbers than usual.

While any explanation of the change would be mere conjecture, it is the writer's theory that these birds gathered in the tall trees to get as far as possible from the noise of fireworks. This spot was comparatively quiet and the trees are somewhat higher than other trees in the vicinity.

-- Tom E. Shields,
Wheeling, W. Va.

Some West Virginia Field Notes: *Falco peregrinus anatum* Duck Hawk: Two birds were seen flying up the gorge of the Guyandotte River in Wyoming County, W. Va., June 28, 1937, a few miles from Pineville. Later in the afternoon of the same day, two were seen flying about Pineville. They remained in that vicinity for about an hour.

Capella delicata. Wilson's Snipe. A juvenile male of this species was collected in Canaan Valley, Tucker County, July 13, 1937, the only one of the species noted.

Larus argentatus smithsonianus. Herring Gull. Dr. George M. Sutton and I saw a large Gull along Big Wheeling Creek at Elm Grove, April 8, 1937, which was probably a Herring Gull.

Empidonax trailli trailli. Alder Flycatcher. Heard four singing birds at Beech Bottom Swamp, Brooke County, on June 16, 1937, and one at Lake Avalon, Ohio County, the same day. (See Sutton's note in *The Cardinal*, Vol. IV, No. 6, July, 1937).

Spiza americana. Dickcissel. One male was heard singing at the Knight Farm, near Lakin, Mason County, June 23, 1937.

Aimophila festivalis bachmani. Bachman's Sparrow. A singing male was taken near Fort Gay, Mason County, June 24, 1937. A female was noted feeding young.

-- Karl Haller,
Wheeling, W. Va.

EDITORIAL NOTES

Advance Dates on National Meetings. The 1937 meeting of the American Ornithologists' Union will be held at Charleston, South Carolina, November 15-19. The business sessions are scheduled for November 15 and field trips for Friday, November 19. Papers will be presented and other routine and special features take place on November 16, 17 and 18. The Wilson Ornithological Club will meet at Indianapolis, Indiana on December 27 and 28, Monday and Tuesday, 1937.

Notes on a Busy Summer. Most active members of The Brooks Bird Club have been busy this summer in their favorite hobby of ornithology. A large number of those most active in the club were present at the school and mountain camp of the tenth annual Oglebay Park Nature Training School. Others conducted independent jaunts into the state ornithological field "on their own" as witness Karl Haller's notes in the present issue. Others, notably Russell West, President, have conducted a series of field trips for the public at Tomlinson's Run, Hancock County, and still others have served as guides and nature counselors in various camps and parks. It is, perhaps, inevitable that clubwork has suffered somewhat amid the press of these personal duties during the summer. Now is the time to "take a hitch in our belts," and buckle down to get back into the swing of another good year as an organization.